

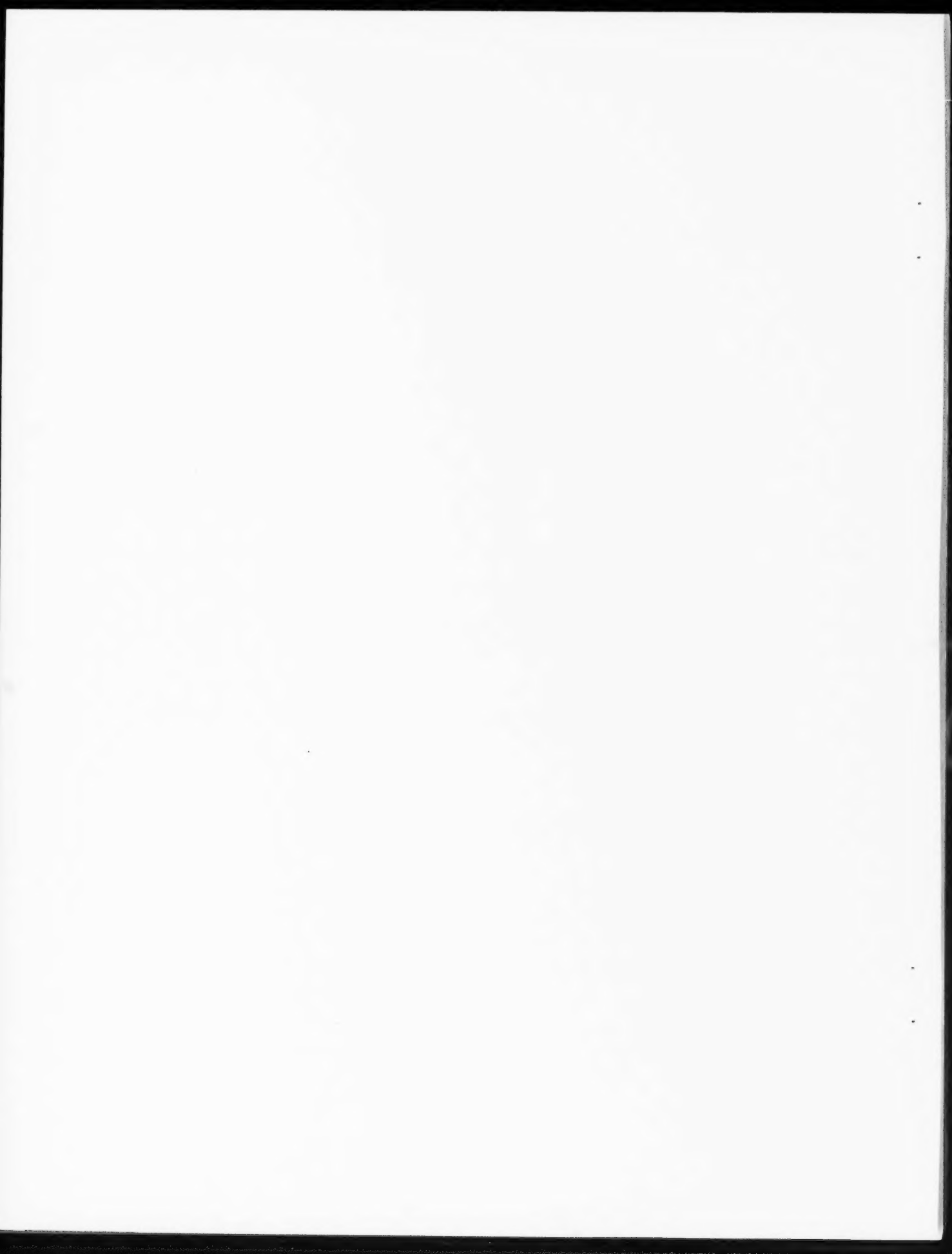
PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN



11-12

PLAN FOR 2011-12

**MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE**



MINISTRY PLAN FOR 2011-12

Statement from the Minister



I am pleased to present the Ministry's Plan for the upcoming year, which is aligned with Government's direction for 2011-12.

With abundant, fertile land across the province, agriculture is a natural component of the *Saskatchewan Advantage*.

Record Crop Insurance coverage and funding in the 2011-12 Agriculture Budget will help protect Saskatchewan producers against risks such as excess moisture.

Saskatchewan Agriculture has increased its Agriculture Budget by \$32 million to \$418 million in 2011-12. This is the second largest Agriculture Budget ever announced in the province's history, next to 2009-10. More than three quarters of this year's Budget will fully fund business risk management programs including Crop Insurance, AgriStability and AgriInvest.

In 2011, the Ministry of Agriculture will continue to deliver the AgriStability Program to Saskatchewan producers through Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) based in Melville, and continue to provide leadership in the Federal-Provincial-Territorial strategic review of business risk management programming.

The provincial government is implementing phase two of its education property tax reduction plan, which will reduce education property taxes by 80 per cent on agricultural land when compared to 2007. This is the largest education tax reduction in the province's history. The mill rate has now been reduced from 7.08 to 3.91 on agricultural land.

As part of the Enterprise Saskatchewan budget, the provincial government introduced the Saskatchewan Renewable Diesel Program, which includes a two per cent renewable diesel mandate beginning in July 2012. The program also includes a five-year incentive that provides 13 cents per litre for renewable diesel produced and sold in Saskatchewan.

In addition, we are increasing funding for research, the Saskatchewan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA), and rat control. The provincial government will continue to provide funding for the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program, the Gopher Control Rebate Program, irrigation infrastructure, the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program, the Farm Business Development Initiative and other programs to benefit producers.

We will also continue to ensure farmers, ranchers, producer groups and industry have regional access to extension services and information with the addition of seven new satellite offices on a pilot basis in 2011-12. This will be a two-year pilot project and is in addition to our 10 existing regional offices.

Finally, we will continue to put Crown land back in the hands of producers through the Agricultural Crown Land Sale Program, with the aim of creating a more attractive business climate for the agriculture industry.

I accept responsibility for furthering Government's commitments while ensuring the Ministry is managed with integrity and professionalism, with a commitment to Government's corporate values and principles. Examining programs and services to ensure the most effective and efficient delivery possible is a key priority for all ministries and an activity that will be reported on as results are achieved.

For more detail on these initiatives, see the Minister of Agriculture's **Mandate Letter** from June 2010. I will report on the progress made toward this Plan, within the financial parameters provided to my Ministry, in the Ministry's annual report.

The Honourable Bob Bjornrud
Minister of Agriculture

Response to Government Direction

Government's plan for the upcoming year is described in the *Government Direction for 2011-12: The Saskatchewan Advantage*. The 2011-12 Budget supports this plan by maintaining and improving our quality of life through enhanced public services and creating more opportunities for all Saskatchewan citizens. Responsible fiscal management means finding the right balance between debt reduction, tax relief, investing in short-term capital infrastructure projects, and matching program spending to long-term, sustainable revenues.

Meanwhile, Government continues to promote effectiveness and efficiency throughout the public service; is continuing with its four-year plan to reduce Government's footprint; and has adopted a "Lean" culture of continuous improvement in the delivery of programs and services.

Ministry Plans for 2011-12 support the fulfillment of Government's **vision for a secure and prosperous Saskatchewan, leading the country in economic and population growth, while providing opportunity for a high quality of life for all**. Government's goals and priorities for the upcoming year are described in the *Government Direction* document, as well as in each ministry plan.

The Plan for 2011-12 communicates a high-level framework for the Ministry's key activities in the upcoming year. All ministries and agencies will report on results achieved or not yet achieved, in their annual reports, to honour Government's commitment to keep its promises, and to ensure greater transparency and accountability to Saskatchewan people.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture is to enable a prosperous, market-driven agricultural industry through a supportive legislative framework, policies, programs and services.

Strategies and Actions

Government Goal – Economic Growth

Sustain **Economic Growth** for the benefit of Saskatchewan people, ensuring the economy is ready for growth and positioning Saskatchewan to meet the challenges of economic and population growth and development.

Strategy

Key 2011-12 Actions

Ensure farmers, ranchers and industry have access to effective business risk management programs

- Participate in the Federal-Provincial-Territorial strategic review and assessment of business risk management programs, for example AgriInvest.
- Develop and implement a marketing and communication plan for increasing industry awareness and understanding of public and private sector business risk management tools.
- Provide provincial contributions to the federally administered AgriInvest Program.
- Effectively administer Business Risk Management programs under Growing Forward, including:
 - ~ assess provincial crop insurance programming in relation to risk management needs of Saskatchewan producers,
 - ~ conclude the transition of the AgriStability program from the federal government to Saskatchewan in 2011.

Ensure farmers, ranchers and industry have regional access to services and information

- Provide regional services to producers through Regional Offices and the Agriculture Knowledge Centre (AKC) in the areas of:
 - ~ program delivery,
 - ~ technical advice and training,
 - ~ business information and services,
 - ~ technology transfer, and
 - ~ environmental farm planning.
- Deliver Growing Forward programs:
 - ~ Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program,
 - ~ Farm and Value-Added Business Development Programming,
 - ~ Environmental Farm Planning,
 - ~ Farm Stewardship Program,
 - ~ On-Farm Food Safety,
 - ~ Post-Farm Food Safety,
 - ~ Biosecurity,
 - ~ Voluntary Traceability,
 - ~ Extension services and youth initiatives, and
 - ~ Science and Innovation.
- Promote Ministry regional service delivery through implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy, to increase awareness and usage of programs.
- Provide diagnostic services in the areas of plant health, insects, weed control and herbicide resistance screening at the Crop Protection Laboratory.

Strategy

Collaborate with other levels of government and industry on key agriculture industry issues

Create an attractive business climate for the agriculture industry and establish the infrastructure that will support business development

Key 2011-12 Actions

- Overcome existing trade barriers by pursuing increased market access and ensuring Saskatchewan interests are reflected in trade agreements (i.e. World Trade Organization agreement; European Union negotiations; bilateral trade agreements and North American Free Trade Agreement).
 - Advocate with the federal government and in specific international forums for science based regulation that is:
 - ~ more effective,
 - ~ removes trade barriers,
 - ~ removes obsolete standards, and
 - ~ is predictable.
 - Under the New West Partnership harmonize agricultural regulatory reform between provinces.
 - Work with industry, provincial ministries and other governments to enhance international opportunities for Saskatchewan's crop and livestock sectors through:
 - ~ increased trade advocacy efforts,
 - ~ avoidance and resolution of trade disruptions,
 - ~ resolution of market access issues,
 - ~ investment attraction, and
 - ~ harmonization of regulations and standards.
 - Advocate Saskatchewan's agriculture interests at Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) engagements (including FPT Ministers', Deputy Ministers', Assistant Deputy Ministers', FPT Trade, etc.).
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- Improve long-term agricultural competitiveness by understanding institutional, infrastructure, taxation, innovation, investment and federal regulatory impediments.
 - Work with industry to foster innovation and competitiveness, reduce the regulatory burden, and promote the industry as an important economic driver for the province.
 - Ensure consistency in the oversight of all Boards, Agencies and Commissions that are responsible to the Agri-Food Council.
 - Continue to review and reform legislation, regulation and policy to provide streamlined client service.
 - Implement improvements and efficiencies in the Agricultural Crown Land Sale Program.
 - Deliver the Livestock Loan Guarantee Program, which provides producers with alternative financing options to purchase livestock or construct or expand feedlot facilities.
 - Administer the interest-only portion of the Federal Advanced Payments Program (APP) in Saskatchewan for feeder cattle and bison.
 - Offer supplemental grazing to Saskatchewan livestock producers via the Saskatchewan Pastures Program.

Strategy

Invest in progressive and relevant research, innovation and commercialization to benefit the agriculture sector

- Implement a plan for the Saskatchewan crop sector that increases investment attraction in Saskatchewan, and contributes to and benefits from the growing local and global demand for food, feed, fuel and fibre, by:
 - ~ building on existing successes,
 - ~ positioning Saskatchewan on the cutting edge of agriculture technology, and
 - ~ increasing the influence of Saskatchewan at the national level in determining research direction and in developing policy and programming.
- Facilitate growth of Saskatchewan's livestock production and processing sectors.
- Collaborate with industry groups and Enterprise Saskatchewan to capture growth opportunities and foster innovation and competitiveness through agriculture biotechnology, increased production, value-added opportunities and sustainable energy development.
- Continue to enhance, expand and deliver farmer-driven demonstration programming and adaptation of technologies to increase crop and livestock competitiveness, production, product development, value-added processing as well as the promotion of technology transfer through programs:
 - ~ Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies Program (ADOPT),
 - ~ Saskatchewan Agri-Value Initiative (SAVI), and
 - ~ AgriArm.
- Increase focus on agricultural biotechnology through research and development supported by an additional annual investment of \$1.25 million.
- Continue to provide industry-led research and development funding through the Agriculture Development Fund.

Promote the agriculture sector and its benefits

- Showcase the Saskatchewan agriculture industry and opportunities on a national and international stage (through international marketing materials).
- Continue financial support where appropriate for agriculture promotion and industry partnerships, for example, Agribition, Farm Progress Show, Crop Production Week and Yorkton Harvest Showdown.
- Provide production information, and highlight agricultural issues and activities occurring in the province's agriculture sector in Agriview.
- Continue to promote Ministry service delivery through implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy.
- Extend the mandate of the Youth Advisory Committee for an additional five years; review and implement committee recommendations in order to attract young people to agriculture and help identify barriers to entry into farming and ranching.
- Work with industry and educational institutions to promote the economic significance of the agriculture sector and communicate it as an attractive career option for Saskatchewan youth, for example, the Ministry's work with Agriculture In The Classroom in developing new resources such as new lesson plans.
- Award the Saskatchewan Agriculture Student Scholarships, worth \$1,000 each, to ten Grade 12 students entering agriculture related post-secondary studies.
- Provide financial support where appropriate to educational partnerships. For example, our three-year sponsorship agreement with Saskatoon's Prairieland Park's Ag-Experience is designed to illustrate to students the importance of agriculture in Saskatchewan and the role farmers and ranchers play in feeding the world.
- Administer the enhanced Green Certificate Farm Training Program, an apprenticeship-style, on-farm skills-training program.

Strategy

Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ministry's programs and services so as to ensure the best use of public funds

Key 2011-12 Actions

- Promote a culture within the Ministry of Agriculture to encourage examination of processes that may be candidates for improvement and public service renewal (Lean is one example).
- Implement efficiencies identified in:
 - ~ AgriStability processes delivered by the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation, to improve service standards, increase producer satisfaction (i.e. accuracy and timeliness) and reduce costs of program delivery.
 - ~ Agricultural Crown Land Sale Program, to reduce the time it takes to process a sale.
- Identify and implement efficiencies in other program areas (eg. livestock inspection process).

Performance Measures

Measure

Baseline / Trend Line Information

Applications for the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP)

Targeted to southwest Saskatchewan

Category	Applications - 2008	Completed - 2009	Completed - 2010
Community well	66	16	41
On-farm projects	2,987	1,455	565

Province-wide

Category	2009		2010	
	Applications	Completed Projects	Applications	Completed Projects
Community well	27	1	18	4
On-farm projects	2,089	650	1,250	1,154

Measure Description

The Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP) supports the development of secure water sources in Saskatchewan to expand the livestock industry, encourage rural economic activity and mitigate the effects of future drought. Farmers, ranchers, Rural Municipalities and Indian Bands across Saskatchewan are eligible for funding of the following projects:

- community wells,
- large diameter and small diameter wells,
- shallow or deep-buried pipelines,
- dugouts.

This program improves the business climate through infrastructure development (i.e. availability of water sources), and it is also one of the Growing Forward suite of programs provided in collaboration with the federal government.

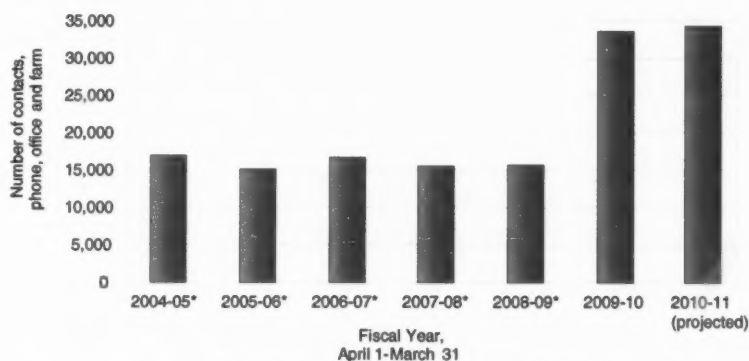
The application period for the targeted (for Southwest Saskatchewan) FRWIP closed on December 3, 2008, and no new applications were accepted in 2009. Due to constraints on construction resources, the completion deadline for projects was extended to December 31, 2010.

The province-wide FRWIP was established under Growing Forward in April 2009. The number of projects completed will provide a measure for success of the program, however, excess moisture received this past year and constraints on construction resources have restricted the number of projects completed to date.

Measure

Baseline / Trend Line Information

Number of contacts with farmers



*AKC only, other years include AKC and Regional Offices

Measure Description

In order to be more readily accessible to the industry, the Ministry transitioned from a centralized service delivery approach to a distributed regional presence in early 2009. This allows regional specialists to be better positioned to help farmers and ranchers increase the profitability and productivity of their operations.

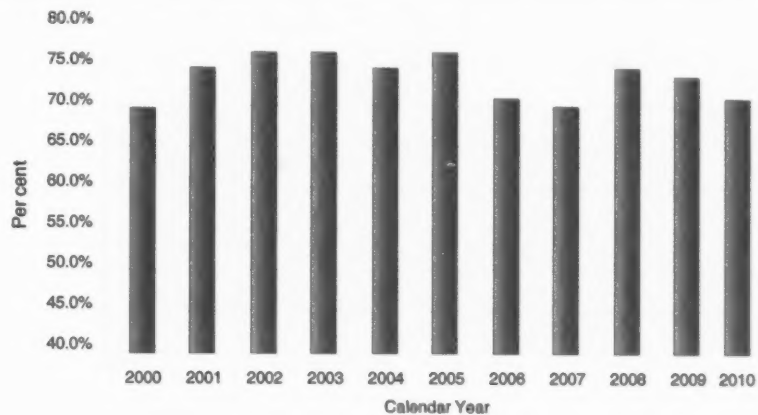
Being more readily available to clients will change the number of contacts with farmers and ranchers enabling the Ministry to gauge the accessibility and usefulness of the technical and support services made available. The number of contacts includes telephone calls, farm visits and office visits at the Ministry's Regional Offices and the Agriculture Knowledge Centre (AKC) located at the Moose Jaw Regional Office.

Note that the increase in number of contacts beginning in 2009-10 reflects reporting from both the AKC and regional offices. Prior to that time, only AKC contacts were tracked.

Measure

Acreage insured under Crop Insurance as a percentage of total seeded acres

Baseline / Trend Line Information



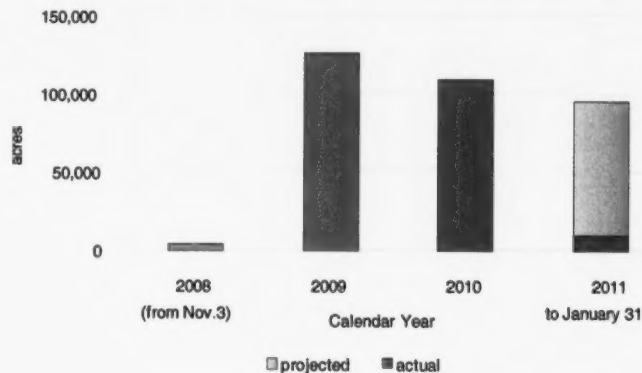
Measure Description

Crop Insurance is a valuable risk management tool for producers. One measure to determine Crop Insurance program participation is comparing insured acreage to the total possible acreage that could be insured. The goal is to maintain or increase the amount of insured acreage in Saskatchewan. But fluctuations occur from year to year for various reasons, including seeding conditions, individual circumstances, program options, crop prices and speculation on the current year's outlook. Changes are made annually to enhance the program and benefit Saskatchewan producers.

Measure

Number of acres of Crown land sold

Baseline / Trend Line Information



Measure Description

In November 2008, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture introduced a five-year Agricultural Crown Land Sale Program to Crown land lessees. The program is designed to encourage lessees to purchase their leased agricultural Crown lands, enabling them more control over their own business operations. Many lessees have been asking for this type of program for a long time and the program fulfills a commitment made in the 2007 Throne Speech.

The program offers agricultural Crown land lessees a sliding scale incentive for purchase, beginning with a 10 per cent incentive on the sale price of the land from November 15, 2008 to December 31, 2010; an eight per cent incentive in 2011; a six per cent incentive in 2012; a four per cent incentive in 2013 and a two per cent incentive in 2014.

The chart shows acres sold since the program began in November 2008 through to acres sold up to the end of January, 2011.

Measure

Presence at trade shows, industry events and partnerships

Baseline / Trend Line Information

Ministry Involvement in 2009-10	2009-10	2010-11
	April 1 to February 28	
Trade show, international meetings, etc.	25	25
Program information sessions, for example, Growing Forward, AgriStability	17	34
Industry conferences, meetings, etc.	120	124
Youth and promotional events	35	40
Information sessions, training, field days	83	90
Other events such as open houses, consultation, etc.	22	35
Federal/Provincial/Territorial meetings	5	11
Total	307	359

Measure Description

This measure provides an indication of the interaction of Ministry staff with the agriculture industry. It provides an insight into several strategy areas, including:

- provision of regional services since much of the Ministry involvement listed in the table is provided in rural areas, for example information sessions, open houses or field days,
- collaboration with other levels of government and industry, and
- promotion of the agriculture sector.

Ministry staff provide production and economic advice by putting on seminars and workshops throughout the province. Regional meetings employing the regional crops, livestock, forage and farm business management specialists are held on a variety of topics.

The Ministry is very active at the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) table. Saskatchewan co-chaired the Ministers', Deputy Ministers' and Assistant Deputy Ministers' FPT Agriculture committees from July 2009 to July 2010. Saskatchewan's objective at these meetings is to ensure that the viewpoints of the Province are considered as the industry progresses and decisions are made.

Many events take place that are attended by school children. Using these venues, the Ministry creates awareness and knowledge of the significance of agriculture to the economy and promotes agriculture as an exciting career opportunity for youth.

If there is overlap, the event is only reported in one category. The number of overall events has increased but the distribution has changed somewhat between fiscal years. For example, information sessions have increased reflecting a large number of information sessions put on by SCIC. Additionally, Regional Services has changed focus from introducing the new service model to providing program workshops or information sessions.

Measure**Baseline / Trend Line Information**

Number of practices, technologies and products demonstrated within Saskatchewan

Fiscal Year	ADOPT Applications Approved	ADOPT Funding Approved
2009-2010	87	\$575,394
2010-2011	95	\$791,058

Measure Description

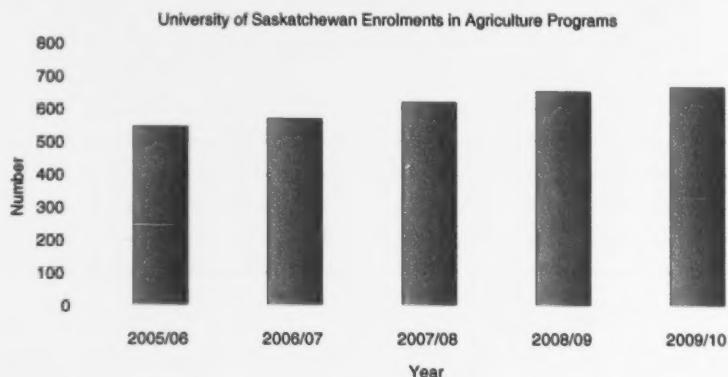
Saskatchewan Agriculture offers a comprehensive portfolio of research and development (R&D) programs designed to meet the current needs and to create future growth opportunities for the agriculture industry. These programs coupled with the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Growing Forward (GF) suite of programs support applied research and development; foster product, process and market development; and help ensure that there is the necessary research capacity in Saskatchewan to meet the needs of our farmers and other sectors of the agriculture industry.

In addition to the Ministry's core R&D programs are the new GF programs that include the Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) program. The purpose of the ADOPT program is to accelerate the transfer of knowledge to Saskatchewan producers and ranchers and to help producer groups evaluate and demonstrate new agricultural practices and technologies at the local level. The results of successful trials can then be adopted more quickly by farming operations in the region. This measure provides an indication of technologies reaching agriculture producers.

Measure

Enrolment in Post-Secondary Agriculture Programs

Baseline / Trend Line Information



Measure Description

This measure tracks the number of students enrolled in post-secondary agriculture programs (data currently for the University of Saskatchewan only).

One of the Ministry strategies is to "promote the agriculture sector and its benefits". Promotional activities that the Ministry is undertaking include the Saskatchewan Agriculture Student Scholarship program, Agriculture in the Classroom and promotional activities through events such as Canadian Western Agribition and the Western Canada Farm Progress Show.

The measure provides an indication of the level of interest in agriculture as a post secondary field of study with Ministry promotion being only one contributing factor. Other factors could include the general economic conditions, university recruiting, promotion of other sectors, etc.. The chart indicates that the number of students has been gradually increasing since 2005-06.